

2002 Biennial and Post Tour

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1. *Jubaea chilensis* at Parc Olbius Riquier. (Photo: S. Zona)

From the French Riviera to Spain and Italy, this biennial and post tour featured the many different palms in cultivation in southern European gardens and nurseries and, of course, *Chamaerops humilis* in the wild.

Our hosts for the biennial meeting, the Association Fous de Palmiers, planned an exciting itinerary with lectures from a diverse slate of palm experts. The meeting was based in Hyères les Palmiers, a city renowned for its gardens and parks, and included a visit to Parc Olbius Riquier. The botanical garden, a former plant introduction site, has a palm collection that includes venerable specimens of *Jubaea chilensis* (Fig. 1) and

Washingtonia filifera (Back Cover).

Our group enjoyed seeing familiar palms used in spectacular ways in private and public gardens. The Villa Thuret featured fantastic specimens of *Chamaerops humilis*, which, judging from their large size, must be of great age (Fig. 2). Those people not attending the post tour visited Villa Menton, a stone's throw from the Mediterranean



2 (top). IPS members enjoy the shade of an ancient *Chamaerops*, Villa Thouret, France. 3 (bottom). The group prepares to explore the garden at Villa Menton, France (Photo: S. Zona).



4 (top left). *Rhopalostylis sapida* in a sheltered spot at Jardin du Rayol-Canodel, France. 5 (top right). *Phoenix dactylifera*, in the garden Huerto del Cura in Elche, Spain. 6 (lower left) *Trithrinax campestris* at Huerto del Cura, Elche, Spain. 7 (lower right) IPS members climb a hill to see wild *Chamaerops* in Cartegena, Spain.

Sea. The garden blends collections of palms, conifers and subtropical exotic plants in an charming naturalist way (Fig. 3).

At Jardin du Rayol-Canodel, a garden dedicated to plants of Mediterranean climates worldwide, the group caught glimpses of beautiful *Rhopalostylis sapida* (Fig. 4) growing in a wet, sheltered depression. We also marveled at an ancient cork oak, Australian banksias, and pines overarching a rugged Mediterranean coastline. The group also visited two large palm nurseries and were pleased to see the commercial response to the growing interest in palms in southern France.

Attendees of the post tour went on to Elche, Spain and the Huerto del Cura, a garden in the midst of

Elche's date palm grove intended for contemplation of both plants and works of art (Fig. 5). The palm collection includes *Trithrinax campestris* (Fig. 6) and other species that are well suited to the dry climate of this region. The group hiked to wild *Chamaerops humilis* in the foothills of Parque Regional de Calbanque in Cartagena, Spain (Fig. 7). After Spain, the group continued to Corsica and Sicily, where we toured private and public gardens, and then on to Rome and Naples. The Orto Botanico of Naples was a particularly fascinating garden, as it grows a large number of interesting palms, alongside conifers, cycads and succulents.

While in France, the group visited a botanical garden in the making, the new Jardin du Palmier



IPS President Horace Hobbs plants a *Sabal bermudana* to commemorate the IPS visit to the new Jardin du Palmier, France.

(Garden of the Palm Tree) in development on Porquerolles Island. Horace Hobbs, IPS President gamely undertook the planting of a *Sabal bermudana* to commemorate the IPS visit (Fig. 8). We look forward to watching the developments in this brand new palm collection and to visiting that 2003 Biennial *Sabal* again someday soon.